

THE GENERAL ANTECEDENTS AND THE PRAY MARCOS PRODROME
OF CORONADO'S EXPEDITION.

XX

Explorations in the Country that Extends from the City of Mexico to the Seven Cities of Cibola, — or chiefly in Chihuahua, Sinaloa, Sonora, Arizona, and New Mexico, — from those of Tejo about 1520 or earlier, to those of Marcos de Niza and Melchior Diaz in 1539.

The expedition of General Francisco Vasquez de Coronado from the City of Mexico to the Indian pueblo region of western New Mexico in quest and conquest of the "Seven Cities of Cibola," with its collateral excursions to the Moqui and Grand Cañon region of Arizona, to the flood-plain region of the Colorado River of the West, to the pueblo region of the Rio Grande Valley and the Rocky Mountains, and over the plains of Texas, Oklahoma, and Kansas, to the fabled country of Quivira, is one of the most remarkable and interesting campaigns of New World exploration and discovery of which we have record.

We can not ~~afford~~ here ~~to give a complete account of it; but several of the Early Far West Papers will be devoted to data and phases of it that have especially interested the present writer and engaged his attention.~~ Readers in whom these fragments may prompt a wish to know more about this great entrada of the Early Far West, are referred to George Parker Winship's little book, "The Journey of Coronado," containing translations of Castañeda's and Jaramillo's narratives and of other original documents concerning it, or to his voluminous and richly illustrated memoir, "The Coronado Expedition, 1540-1542," with its like translations, its elaborate Historical Introduction, and some of the original Spanish texts, in the Fourteenth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology; and to the classic researches of Bandelier and Hodge (cited elsewhere in these Papers), the Complete Works of Hubert Howe Bancroft, and the writings of Haynes,* Brewer,** Richey,***^{Baskett,***} and others.

*In Winsor's Narrative and Critical History of America, Volume IV.

**Memoirs of Explorations in the Basin of the Mississippi.

***In Kansas Historical Collections, Volume VIII.

****In Kansas Historical Collections, Volume XII.

Footnote

Before taking up the expedition itself, we shall devote this first ^{Paper} to its antecedents; that is, we shall notice the chief considerations that led to its being undertaken, and shall review its more important antecedent and preparatory explorations, together with certain other related conditions and events. Amongst recent authors, these subjects have been discussed at more or less length, and with omission or emphasis of certain phases, by Bancroft, Winship, and others, and especially by Handelier. Their treatment here will be somewhat comprehensive, but without any pretense to completeness.

In Chapter I of Castañeda's Relacion, "which treats of the way we first came to know about the Seven Cities, and of how Nuño de Guzman made an expedition to discover them," as translated by Winship, ~~we read~~ ^[1529] we read, "In the year 1530, Nuño de Guzman, who was President of New Spain, had in his possession an Indian, a native of the valley or valleys of Oxitipar*, who was called Tejo by the Span-

*Oxitipar was not far from Meztitlan, north-northeasterly from the City of Mexico. In the dispute between ~~Nuño de Guzman and~~ Captain Gil Gonzalez de Benavides and Nuño de Guzman regarding jurisdiction over territory on the border between the kingdom of New Spain and the province of Pánuco, according to a document of 1528 cited by Bancroft (X, 266), "Benavides offered to surrender 'Tepehuacan, Quautla, Yahualica,' but insisted on retaining the towns in the district of 'Meztitlan, Oxitapa, Tlamatlan, and Guazalingo'." These places are in the northeastern quarter of the State of Hidalgo; Meztitlan being at less than half, and several if not all of the others ^{also} between half and two-thirds of the distance from the City of Mexico to the village of Pánuco.

iards. This Indian said he was the son of a trader who was dead, but that when he was a little boy his father had gone into the back country with fine feathers to trade for ornaments, and that when he came back he brought a large amount of gold and silver, of which there is a good deal in that country. He went with him once or twice, and saw some very large villages, which he compared to Mexico and its environs. He had seen seven very large towns which had streets of silver workers. It took forty days to go there from his country, through a wilderness in which nothing grew, except some very small plants about a span high. The way they went was up through the country between the two seas, following the northern direction. Acting on this information, Nuño de Guzman got together nearly 400 Spaniards and 20,000 friendly Indians of New Spain, and, as he happened to be in Mexico, he crossed Tarasca, which is in the province of Michoacan, so as to get into the region which the Indian said was to be crossed toward the North sea, in this way getting to the country

which they were looking for, which was already named 'The Seven ~~Indian~~ Cities.' He thought, from the forty days of which the Tejo had spoken, that it would be found to be about 200 leagues, and that they would easily be able to cross the country."*

Footnote *Castañeda, Winship's Translation, Bu. Eth. Ann. XIV, 472-3. A discussion of Spanish leagues will be found in Early Far West Paper, No. 2.

It is not now ~~generally~~ believed that any knowledge of silver working existed in Cibola at the time of ~~the~~ ^{the latter's} discovery, although Coronado stated in 1540, a few weeks after his arrival there, that some gold and silver had been found there, which was adjudged "not bad" by those who knew about minerals; but he added that he could not learn whence these precious metals were obtained, and that the Cibolans were not disposed to tell him the truth about things, believing he must soon depart. If the Zuñis ~~had~~ at that time ^{had} any knowledge of working silver, it was doubtless slight, and did not include melting nor recovery of silver from the ore, but only the shaping of small pieces of the native metal which they may have found; and even such knowledge as that, and ^{any} ~~information~~ ^{possessed} about places where silver or gold occurred, would no doubt have been religiously concealed by them, so soon as it was discovered that these metals were prime objects with the hated white invaders who had ~~caused~~ ^{them} so much fear and misfortune. ~~It is~~ It is a curious fact, however, that the Zuñis, like the Hopis and other Pueblo Indians — as well as especially the Navahos, who have a large admixture of Pueblo blood — have in recent times shown special aptitude for silver working, by methods ^{which sometimes} ~~that~~ include use of the crucible and which they have learned ~~from white men~~ from white men; and, while it is not quite an instance in which "history repeats itself," the "streets of silver workers" in Cibola have latterly a partial realisation in the fact that in the present pueblo of Zuñi there are shops of silversmiths. One of these shops is shown in the accompanying illustration, reproduced from the Twenty-third Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology.*

Footnote *Mrs. M. C. Stevenson's memoir, The Zuñi Indians.

*Illustration: Here introduce
reduction of Plate XCV from
Bu. Eth. Ann. Rep. XXIII.*

~~which they were looking for which was already named the Seven Cities. He thought, from the forty days of travel the Spaniards had made, that it would be found to be about 200 leagues, and that they would easily be able to cross the country.~~

~~Castañeda's translation, pp. 178-179. See also the original in the original manuscript.~~

From Castañeda's account alone, one would suppose that the army had been ~~formed~~ ^{formed} with the sole object of search for the Seven Cities, and it is not improbable that the discovery of these was with Guzman an ultimate object, ~~and was~~ ^{but if so, Tejo must have told his story at least as early as 1529.} and was held forth by him as one means of enlisting men under his banner. Another incentive was the hope of ~~finding~~ ^{finding}, in a reported northwestern province ~~of the~~ ^{and town of Ciguatan ("place of women"),} ~~of the~~ ^{a realization} of the cosmographers' tales of the "rich and mysterious isles of the Amazons." But the immediate and impelling cause of his undertaking was quite different from either of these matters. The following account of this ~~the~~ expedition of 1529-31 is condensed chiefly from Bancroft's "History of Mexico" and "History of the North Mexican States and Texas."

Guzman's presidential administration in New Spain, though brief, had been so high-handed and obnoxious to the people* that rumblings from Spain

*As an illuminating example of his methods, we need only mention the following incident of his rule a little earlier, as governor of the province of Panuco; his rule as President of New Spain being ~~the~~ full of equally and even more infamous outrages. He attempted to sequester the property of certain Spanish settlers beyond the borders of his own province. "Several of them being cavaliers refused to bend to the imperious governor, and were therefore lashed and tortured; one was nailed to a post by the tongue for insolent language, and another was hanged, while the natives of their towns were many of them butchered for obeying their masters." (Bancroft, X, 265.)

warned him of impending removal from office and of superseding by a rival and enemy, from whom, should he come under his power, he might expect well-merited vengeance. Like the shrewd lawyer that he was, he therefore planned to retain royal favor by exploring new lands and adding to the royal domain of Spain a new kingdom which, as his reward, he should rule independently of his successor in New Spain. It mattered not, and indeed suited him the better, if this should be in lands claimed and in part already explored, and designed for farther and authorized discovery, by Cortés. He accordingly used and abused all the great powers of his office in the formation of ~~a great~~ army of conquest. "By generous gifts to captains in his confidence, chief among whom were Cristóbal de Oñate, Rodrigo de Albornoz, and Peralmíndez Chirinos, of pueblos which of right belonged to Cortés and others, by means of liberal bounties and seductive promises to some, while the unwilling were forced to enlist or to send substitutes, Guzman succeeded in recruiting a sufficient number of men in Guatemala,

~~was~~ Cajaca, and elsewhere. He filled his military chest by seizure of funds belonging to the crown, an act involving a constructive arrest of the treasury officials who opposed him, and the extortion of forced loans from the wealthy of the city, though this was forbidden by law. Preparations for the campaign, though hasty, were thorough, and greatly facilitated because of the almost omnipotent power enjoyed by the president, and just before Christmas he hastened to his usual pleasant pastime in fresh fields at the head of the largest and best equipped army that as yet had marched under the royal banner in the New World, consisting as it did of two hundred horse, three hundred foot-soldiers, and some artillerymen with twelve guns, together with at least ten thousand Tlascaltecos and Mexicans.....

"It was in December 1529 that Nuño de Guzman left the capital as one flying from retribution."*

Footnote *Bancroft, X, pp. 293-4 and 344.

"The route lay through Michoacan and down the Rio Grande de Lerma to the region of the modern Guadalajara. This first stage of the advance was signalized by the brutal and unprovoked murder of King Tangaxoan Caltzontzin, after he had been forced by torture to furnish thousands of servants for the northern expedition, and to relinquish all the little wealth that remained to him. Later progress was in keeping with the bloody beginning. In May 1530 the several divisions of the army were reunited after having overrun the whole of what is now southern and ~~eastern~~ Jalisco. Some detachments seem to have penetrated as far northward as the sites of Lagos, Aguas Calientes, Zacatecas, and Jerez. Guzman's advance was marked everywhere by complete devastation, and few pueblos escaped burning. No attention was paid to the rights of the former ~~conquerors~~ conquerors, Avalos and Francisco Cortés, but the policy was to make it appear that the country had never been conquered, and that the present conquest was not an easy one; therefore such Indians as were not hostile at first, were soon provoked to hostility, that there might be an excuse for plunder and destruction and carnage, and especially for making slaves. This chapter of horrors continued to the end of the expedition, but outrages were considerably less frequent and terrible in the far north than south of the Rio Grande. A garrison was left at Tepic, the germ of the later Compostela, and on May 29th Guzman crossed the Rio Tololotlan into unexplored territory, of which he took formal possession under the name of Greater Spain, a title designed to eclipse that of New Spain applied to the conquest of Cortés."*

Footnote *Bancroft XV, pp. 28-29.

Advancing up the coast by short stages, Guzman and his army successively explored and conquered the provinces of Aztatlan (where most of the latter half of 1530 was spent and the army suffered great losses by flood and pestilence), Chametla, Quezala (in the region of present Mazatlan), Piaxtla, Ciguatan, and Culiacan.

The province of Ciguatan (or Ciguatlan) above mentioned, was ^{on a} river of that name, which the Spaniards translated "Rio de las Mujeres." The Rio "Ciguatlan" is shown on D' Anville's map of North America (1748), as a small river a few leagues south of Rio Culiacan, in the position of that now called Rio San Lorenzo.

"The rich and mysterious isles of the Amazons had been from the first one of the strongest incentives to northwestern exploration in the minds of both Cortés and Guzman. The cosmographer by his vagaries had furnished the romancer with sufficient foundation for the fable; the tales of natives from the first conquest of Michoacan had seemed to support it; and ^{as} Guzman proceeded northward and drew nearer to Ciguatan his hopes were greatly excited. Natives along the route were willing to gratify the Spanish desire for the marvellous, or perhaps the interpreters' zeal outran their linguistic skill."

Marvellous details concerning Ciguatan, "the wonderful City of Women," are recited by writers "as having been told" ^{by} [the Spaniards] "before they arrived" [there], ~~which details are not to be taken literally~~

"and as corroborated more or less completely by what they saw and heard at Ciguatan, where they found many women and few men. But, as several of them admit, it was soon discovered that the men had either fled to avoid the Spaniards or to make preparations for an attack."*

Footnote

*Bancroft ~~Man, 214-220 and 221~~ ~~Vol. XV, 34.~~

In the province of Culiacan, headquarters was made at a place which they called Colombo, apparently ~~only a short distance~~ a short distance above the native village of Culiacan and on the river of the latter name; and from it several parties were sent out for exploration. In one of these, despatched northward, along the coast region, Lope de Samaniego reached "the Rio de Petatlan—so called from the potatoes, or mats, with which the natives covered their dwellings." In another, Gonzalo Lopez, the army-master, succeeded in crossing the sierras to the eastward of the sources of the rivers Culiacan and San Lorenzo, and penetrated far into the territory which is now the state of Durango; and Guzman, who had brought the army as far as

Guamochiles and had there received word by a messenger that a pass had been found by Lopez, proceeded to follow after, but being ill and borne on a litter, and having ~~gone~~^{gone} forty leagues over the rough mountain route, or "almost across the range," and ^{having} met Lopez returning with the report that a march of seventy leagues across the plains had led to nothing," and that "the country afforded no supplies," he abandoned the undertaking, and "slowly and despondently....retraced his steps, with great hardships and losses, especially of horses, to Culiacan, or Colombo, where he arrived on Santiago day, or July 25th", 1531.*

Footnote ¹ ~~1~~ Ibid., pp. 36 and 37.

In the province ~~of Culiacan~~ of Culiacan, Guzman now founded the Villa of San Miguel. ^{This was at first} ~~located~~ ^{at Navita*} on the Rio San Lorenzo; but it ^{was then} ~~was then~~ ^{removed} to the native town of Culiacan ^{on the river of Culiacan and was} thereafter known as San Miguel de Culiacan, ^{or} San Miguel, or Culiacan, according to the speaker's convenience. By sorties through the surrounding country, San Miguel ~~was~~ ^{Guzman} stocked with provisions, and ^{having} left in it "one hundred soldiers, fifty cavalry, and fifty infantry", as settlers, ~~and with~~ ^{having appointed} many Indian servants, and ~~with~~ Captain Diego de Proano as alcalde mayor and Brother Alvaro Gutierrez as curate, and having made other needful "arrangements for the new settlement," starting in the middle of October, he returned with his army to Jalisco, where he made Compostela the capital of ^{his} "Greater Spain."

^{in silence} Castañeda passes over ^{Guzman's} ~~most of~~ ^{in this campaign of 1529-131,} ~~what~~ ^{does} but throws one or two interesting sidelights on ~~the~~ conditions at Culiacan and elsewhere. He says, in part, "as soon as they had reached the ~~edge of the province of Culiacan, where~~ ^{edge of the province of Culiacan, where} his government ended, and where the New Kingdom of Galicia is now, they tried to cross the country, but found the difficulties very great, because the mountains which are near that sea are so rough that it was impossible, after great labor, to find a passageway in that region. His whole army had to stay in the district of Culiacan for so long on this account that some rich men who were with him, who had possessions in Mexico, changed their minds, and every day became more anxious to return. Besides this, Nuño de Guzman received word that the Marquis of the Valley, Don Fernando Cortes, had come from Spain with his new title," ["Marqués del Valle de Oaxaca y Capitan General de la Nueva España y de la Costa del Sur"], "and with great favors and estates, and as Nuño de Guzman had been a great rival of

Footnote
* See in Guzman's Memoirs, II, 30, the edge's citation of Jalisco.